



Ramps view of the new Terminal Building at Gallatin Field

VOL. 29, NO. 3



Gordon Sands, Veteran Montana Pilot, from Havre, Montana.

## FIFTY YEARS AS A PILOT

Gordon Sands' flying career started in 1928 by trading the use of a pasture conveniently located to the town of Havre for whatever dual instruction he could wangle from itinerant barnstorming pilots. By fall he was soloed and

the following year he bought a very tired OX5 American Eagle biplane. As was the custom at that time, that put him in business and he immediately started hauling passengers and instructing.

A couple of years later he acquired another and much better American Eagle and went on from there through a succession of the airplanes of the times, such as OX5 and Challenger, Curtis Robins, Monocoupe, Luscombe, Globe Swift, Stinson, J-3, PA 11, Super Cubs, several models of Cessna and finally the Comanche he has flown for the last 13 years. Sands has always been primarily a farmer-rancher, but along the way he acquired commercial, instructor and instrument ratings and continued to do a limited amount of flying for hire.

During World War II he instructed in the Civilian Pilot Training Program, which he could do and still conduct his farming operations. Following that he conducted a very successful coyote hunting operation, mostly in southern Alberta and Saskatchewan where coyotes were even more of a menace to livestock and wildlife than they were in Montana. In the late 40's when crop spraying was introduced he got into aerial spraying, primarily on his own and his tenants' lands, and continued to do so for the next 23 seasons.

Sands helped to organize the Montana Pilots Association and was one of its original directors. In 1941 he was

A graphic logo for the Montana Aeronautics Division. At the top, the word "MONTANA" is written in a bold, sans-serif font, with "and the SKY" in a smaller font below it. To the right of the text is a stylized illustration of a propeller airplane in flight, leaving a trail of smoke. Below the airplane, the words "MONTANA", "AERONAUTICS", and "DIVISION" are stacked vertically in a serif font. The entire logo is contained within a rectangular border.

March

FEBRUARY, 1978

elected its president. In 1966 he was named Pilot of the Year by Montana Pilots Association and in 1973 he was honored with a life membership by the same organization.

He also helped to organize the Montana Flying Farmers and Ranchers and was a director at various times.

In 1945 Governor Ford named Sands to a committee of aviation-oriented citizens to study and prepare legislation to create an aeronautics commission. A bill was prepared and introduced at the 1947 session of the Montana Legislature. The bill was passed and the predecessor of the present Aeronautics Division was created. Sands was appointed to the Commission as the representative of the Montana Pilots Association by Governor Hugo Aronson in 1953.

Sands was an original member of the Havre City-County Airport Board starting in 1941 and served until 1965. He also served as a Search and Rescue Coordinator for 20 years and participated in many searches in his own district as well as in other parts of the state. In July, 1968, Sands was presented an Award of Merit Certificate by the Aeronautics Commission in recognition of distinguished service in support of Air Search and Rescue in Montana. As coordinator he participated in more than 20 searches, 15 of which involved his own area wherein he acted as state coordinator for the

(Continued on Page 7)

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THURBER'S  HELENA

## PATIENCE PLEASE!

For those aircraft owners who have not yet received their registration decals, please be patient. The bulk of the registration flooded this office the last few days before the March 1 deadline and overwhelmed our small clerical staff. If your registration was received in time, you need have no worry about a penalty. Your registration decal will be in your hands in a few days.

For those aircraft owners who have not registered, the new legislation delayed the deadline an extra month—from February 1 to March 1—to pay your taxes, complete and mail your registration. However, as the deadline has passed, those who register now must include a \$100.00 penalty with the \$4.00 registration fee.

## ADMINISTRATOR'S COLUMN



I attended the Montana Aviation Trades Association Convention held in Great Falls March 1 - 4. The agenda covered many interesting and meaningful presentations. Among several well known aviation experts on the program was Bernie Geier, Chief of the General Aviation Division, Washington, D.C. Bernie spoke on rules and regulations affecting the operator and the birth of an FAR. Bernie is well known to the Montana fixed base operators as he was GADO Chief in Billings for many years. The highlight of the convention was banquet speaker Don Hawkins of Hawkins Avionics Company. I am sure those present would agree that Don's excellent speech was an inspiration to all.



Bernie Geier, Chief of the General Aviation Division, Washington, D.C., speaking at the MATA Convention, Great Falls.



Don Hawkins, Hawkins Avionics Company, speaking at the MATA Convention in Great Falls.

The new officers elected are Dick Van Luchene, President; Andre Morris, Vice President; Karen Lathrop, Executive Secretary; Directors: Jim Stroh, Paul Newby, Clyde Fredrickson, Wayne Turner and Ted Rieke. Bob Palmersheim is the FBO representative. Although Martin Elshire modestly gives a great deal of credit to his secretary, Karen Lathrop, and his wife Ruby, I would like to compliment him on a well organized and excellent convention and I am grateful for having been asked to participate.

Although it will be past history by the time you receive this publication, the Aeronautics Board will hold the Big Sky Airline hearing on March 16. Big Sky Airline has applied for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity to operate Metroliner aircraft on routes serving Billings, Helena, Kalispell, Missoula and Butte. This application has elicited a great deal of interest and we are anticipating a larger than normal turnout for the hearing. I will report the results of this hearing in our next newsletter.

Jack Wilson and Sam Griggs are winding down the annual Flight Instructor Refresher Course being held in Helena. Both the Helena and Billings GADO's have availed their flight examiners to be present on Friday to reinstate and renew flight instructor certificates. Although not participating in actual instruction, Ken McNees and Jack VanDeRiet of the Helena GADO

assisted in other portions of the program. Others participating in the program are Jack Poppe, U.S. Weather Service; Will Mavis and Ken Burnside in Tower and Flight Service Operations; flight tutors Bob Palmersheim, Paul Newby, Fritz Lueneberg, Jeff Morrison and George Wetherell. Fritz Lueneburg, Gene Wehrman, Randy Link and Paul Newby instructed on subjects of flight maneuvers, multi engine, instruments, FAR's, flight instructor responsibilities and fundamentals. Dick Hatfield instructed on survival.

The last two days of the course will be strictly devoted to actual flight instruction with several of the above-named serving also as flight instructors. So far the feedback has been enthusiastic and it is felt that this year's program has been greatly improved over last year's. We certainly hope so as the Aeronautics Division pioneered this program many years ago which we feel resulted in many other states and the FAA having become involved.

Our sincere thanks to these dedicated people who helped make the 1978 FIRC a success.



## CALENDAR

April 1 — Reopening Airport Cafe, Lewistown Airport, Lewistown, MT

June 1 — Reopening of Yellowstone Airport, West Yellowstone, MT.

June 2, 3 & 4 — Montana Pilots Convention, Heritage Inn, Great Falls.

June 12-30 — Aviation Education Summer Workshops, Montana Tech, Butte.

June 12-21 — Aviation Education Summer Workshops, Montana State, Bozeman.

June 19-28 — Aviation Education Summer Workshops, Eastern Montana College, Billings.

June 29-July 1 — Aviation Education Summer Workshops, Northern Montana College, Havre.

July 10-21 — Aviation Education Summer Workshops, Carroll College, Helena.

August 6 — Air Show, Livingston, MT.

Oct. 6-8 — Montana Flying Farmers Convention, Havre.



Martin Elshire and Karen Lathrop at MATA registration desk.



Jim Stroh, Paul Newby, Karen Lathrop and Robert Loague.



Martin & Ruby Elshire, Rose and Dick Van Luchene.

## GALLATIN FIELD DEDICATES NEW TERMINAL BUILDING



By: Ted Mathis

Several hundred persons were in attendance February 19 for the dedication of the new 27,000 square foot terminal building at Gallatin Field near Bozeman. The \$1.68 million dollar building has been in operation for about a month.

Bill Merrick, Chairman of the Airport Board, served as master of ceremonies for the event. Guest speakers were Lt. Governor Ted Schwinden; Donald Nyrop, Chairman of the Board of Northwest Airlines; and Al Feldman, President of Frontier Airlines.

The Belgrade high school band entertained the crowd as did Al Newby with a spectacular aerobatic display in his antique Great Lakes biplane.

One of the highlights of the ceremony was the presentation of a metallic flight of ten Canada Geese which greets visitors in the center stairway area of the building. These beautiful geese were sculpted by Jim Dolan of Bozeman and presented to the airport by Pete and Vivian Waite. Mr. Waite has served on the Gallatin County Airport Board for nearly forty years.

The new terminal features second level jetport boarding for Northwest passengers and first level boarding for those who fly with Frontier. It has a coffee shop, gift shop and three car rental agencies. Yellowstone Park Company provides bus transportation from the front door.

Our congratulations to the people of Gallatin County on the opening of this fine new facility.



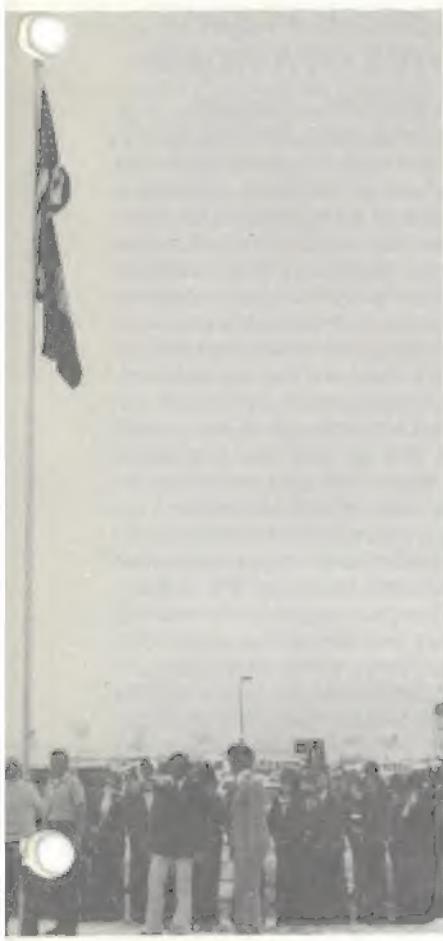
Chairman of the Board of Northwest Airlines,  
Donald Nyrop, speaking at Gallatin Field.



The first flag  
Field. The na  
Bozeman Elks



Looking up the stairway at the flight of ten beautiful metal sculptured geese in the new terminal building.



ng in front of the new terminal at Gallatin  
al and state flags were donated by the  
ub.



Members of the Montana Aeronautics Board inspecting the new Gallatin Field Terminal and snow removal equipment.



Frontier Airlines President Al Feldman,  
Gallatin Field Dedication.



Lt. Governor Ted Schwinden, speaking at Gallatin Field  
Terminal Building dedication.

## CENTERLINE

By: Jim White, Chief  
Air Transportation Bureau

### NTSB ISSUES SAFETY STATISTICS

The National Transportation Safety Board has issued its 1977 safety statistics for general aviation, which cover all U.S. civil aviation except air carrier operations.

Safety Board Acting Chairman Kay Bailey reported that the 1977 safety record of general aviation remains relatively the same as 1976. The figures reveal an increase in total accidents, a slight decrease in fatal accidents, but an overall increase in total fatalities.

Total accidents in 1977 general aviation increased nearly 7 per cent. The number of all accidents increased from 4,196 in 1976 to 4,476 in 1977. While the number of fatal accidents was down from 695 in 1976 to 693 in 1977, the total number of fatalities increased from 1,320 in 1976 to 1,395 in 1977.

These figures are based on 100,000 aircraft hours flown. They show that the "total" accident rate increased from 11.6 in 1976 to 11.8 in 1977. In contrast, the "fatal" accident rate decreased from .192 in 1976 to 1.82 in 1977.

Chairman Bailey also noted that the overall trends in these "total" and "fatal" accident rates have been generally decreasing for the past 11 years. The "total" rate decreased from 27.6 in 1967 to 11.8 in 1977. The "fatal" rate decreased from 2.72 in 1967 to 1.82 in 1977.

The Board's safety statistics for U.S. general aviation are based on all operations involving the current fleet of some 180,000 airplanes.

**CONTROLLERS WILL BE TOLD THAT READBACKS ARE IMPORTANT** when clearances contain altitudes and vectors, especially if the latter are meant to provide standard separation, according to a notice FAA is preparing for issuance. That notice is an interim measure while the agency conducts a study to determine the feasibility of issuing a notice of proposed rulemaking to revise FAR Part 91 to require pilots to read back those parts of clearances that contain vectors and/or altitudes. The study represents a modification of an earlier announcement that FAA would issue such a proposal. NTSB had recommended that controllers be required to solicit readbacks for all clearances. FAA's initial response was that the increased workload and communications adop-

tion of the recommendation would create rendered the recommendation impractical, which prompted an unfavorable reaction from NTSB. FAA said the study would not be completed until sometime this summer and that any final action "will be predicated on the results of this study."

**AIM PARTS II AND III ARE BEING PHASED OUT AND WILL BE REPLACED** by a smaller, more compact publication that will contain the same information, but will be divided into seven volumes. Each volume will cover a specific geographical area, and all are scheduled for publication by this May. The new publication, entitled "Airport/Facility Directory," will be published by the National Oceanic Survey, but FAA will continue to compile the data. The one volume subscription price is \$10.00, while a two-book subscription costs \$17.50. The price for all seven volumes is \$37.50. Each volume will be revised every 56 days. AIM Parts II and III will be discontinued in about a year, FAA said.

### WHAT IS GENERAL AVIATION?

General Aviation is usually described as all civil flying except the scheduled airlines. But with the steady and continuing growth of general aviation, there is another way of describing it:

General Aviation is 98 per cent of the airplanes in the U.S. . . . flown by 96 per cent of the pilots . . . flying 79 per cent of the civil flight hours . . . accounting for 71 per cent of the total airplane miles . . . carrying more than 50 per cent of the nation's air travellers . . . to 100 per cent of the nation's airports.

## GLENDIVE HANGAR MPA

Viggo Hansen, Secretary-Treasurer of the Glendive Hangar reports that the January meeting was held in the terminal building at the Community airport. The following members were unanimously elected to office: President, Denia Cunningham; Vice President, Warren Engle; and Secretary-Treasurer, Viggo Hansen. A committee was formed to organize a Valentine party.

Various ideas were discussed on how to increase membership, and there was a tour of the Glendive Airport fire and rescue truck and building.

## USE YOUR FLIGHT SERVICE STATIONS

By: Bill Rahn, Livingston

What criteria does the FAA use in gathering the statistical data which has led to high level decisions charting a course towards part timing and eventual closure of some of our Montana Flight Service Stations? This seemed to be an underlying but key question during the recent visit to Washington, D.C. by a delegation of Montana pilots in an effort to forestall the above action. The numerical picture used in Washington appears to differ greatly from real life as we see it here in Montana. Since numbers are the name of the game it is important that we in the aviation community know where they come from and how they are compiled so that we can input into the system. Statistically speaking, decision making data is only as valid as the perimeters (or guidelines) established for its collection and the accuracy of the inputs into the system. We as pilots register an input each time we speak into our radio mike. The value of that input is determined by what we say or the service we request. We will concern ourselves with primarily VFR operations since that is the primary service area of flight service stations.

A Flight Service Station (FSS) will be entitled to one point for each aircraft it talks to by radio. Additionally, the FSS will receive 2 points for each flight plan filed with it as well as 2 points for each pilot briefing.

Consider a VFR flight from Butte to Miles City by way of Bozeman, Livingston and Billings. If you ask for an airport advisory at Butte and depart for Miles City, with no weather check or flight plan, and ask for an advisory at Miles City, the Flight Service Stations in Montana receive 2 points. That is two aircraft contacts.

Another aircraft on the same trip and route files a flight plan to Miles City. He gets a weather briefing and contacts the flight service station for airport advisory. These three actions have a value of 5 points. As this aircraft passes Bozeman he checks Livingston, Billings, and Miles City weather. One briefing and one aircraft contact for 3 points. Passing Livingston the pilot gives a position report and checks weather at Billings and Miles City for another 3 points. At Billings he gives a position report and requests Miles City weather and winds aloft. Since it re-

quires two different elements of weather to count a weather briefing, again the count is 3 points. He gets an airport advisory at Miles City, lands and closes out his flight plan for one point.

These two flights over the same route demonstrate the extremes statistically that can be achieved by first minimum use, and secondly maximum use of the system. The first flight accumulated only 2 points, while the second one, however, rang up 15 points.

The FAA compiles its statistics in this manner and if we wish to retain the services we have now we must register our acceptance and need of them by using them.

Suffice to say, IFR data is deposited in another bank (figuratively speaking) and the balance there is used to substantiate that system and its associated facilities. Because of the costs involved in the IFR system it is statistically inflated and unless we as users are careful, it will overshadow VFR operations to the point that the latter may no longer be allowed.

(Continued from Page 1)

entire search. In addition he frequently participated as search pilot in other districts in cooperation with other search coordinators.

It may be of interest that the pasture used in 1928 as the local landing field (the present Havre airport hadn't yet been established) has been converted to a grass strip and has been used continuously since that time. Unicom was installed in the Sands' residence about 25 years ago and except for infrequent maintenance or replacement it hasn't been turned off since. On several occasions, particularly before the advent of the Havre VOR and communications hook-up with Great Falls, as well as at night when other local communications are inoperative, the Sands Ranch Unicom, as it is called, has on several occasions come to the aid of pilots in some degree of distress and has prevented what might have been some serious accidents. More recently monitors of other frequencies such as 121.5 emergency and all the area communication channels, as well as Havre VOR have been added.

At age 77, with 50 years and 9,000 hours of flying behind him, Sands has no plans to hang up his helmet and goggles. On the contrary, it is rumored that he is looking around for an open biplane so that he can put them back into service.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the Editor

To All Fixed Base Operators:

Big things are happening in the Montana Aviation Trades Association, (MATA). The annual MATA Convention was held March 1-4 in Great Falls.

Among items under consideration are presentation of a united front to represent all operators in the state, at federal and state level, regarding regulations and legislation which affect us, often adversely.

Our MATA representative to the National Agricultural Aviation Association, Andre Morris of Dillon Flying Service, is representing us at the NAAA Director's meeting in Washington, D.C. March 6-8. All aerial operators are affected by legislation already passed by Congress giving the EPA broad powers to restrict our operations. More legislation is forthcoming, and we can influence its outcome by proper united representation. If you are not an MATA member, please join and help us with the problems we all face. Numbers have strength in Washington, and we need strength to support our position. The annual membership fee is only \$30.00, which I feel is one of the best expenditures an operator can make. Send your membership check to Karen Lathrop, Aerotronics II, Great Falls International Airport, Great Falls, Montana 59405, and encourage your neighboring FBO's to join also.

Respectfully,  
/s/ Wayne C. Turner  
Triangle Aviation, Big Sandy

## "THREE WHEEL VS. FOUR WHEEL"

By: Dale Uppinghouse  
Accident Prevention Specialist  
FAA GADO 1

We usually find a nose wheel supporting the big end of an airplane. The wheel is there to steer the machine, keep the propeller out of the dirt, and to keep the big end in front during takeoffs and landings. This wheel and strut isn't big and heavy like the wheel and suspension on a four wheel drive truck. It doesn't take an IQ of 140 to understand why. If it were big and heavy the airplane wouldn't fly worth a darn, would it? Neither would it fit in the hole on retractable types.

When it comes to ground operations, airplanes are rather frail. Sure, they are stressed for high airloads. Wing struts, spars, fittings, etc. are comparatively massive. Not so with parts that don't have to be super strong. Undercarriages are not engineered for high mileage and continuous operation through mud and chuck holes. A few trainers are made to withstand Godawful landings but even trainers are not made to ram through snow drifts, mud, ditches, or pastures too rough to gallup a horse. A full understanding of this fact could cut the aircraft accident rate in Montana in half.

Notwithstanding this frailty, a few pilots attempt these bulldozing operations with airplanes. Sometimes they even use their own airplanes to try it. Following these operations there is usually an accident report to be made. The pilot's explanation in the narrative portion is a study in psychology: About half of the pilots say, "I'm never going to try that again." The other half are indignant. They say, "Look how much I paid for that airplane and it won't plow through a little snow."

## UNICOM FREQUENCIES



By: Jerry Burrows  
Aviation Representative

The Federal Communications Commission has authorized the use of additional frequencies for the Unicom Aeronautical Advisory Stations. In the past over 2,000 stations had the frequency of 122.8 Mhz which was very difficult to use in congested parts of the country. 122.70 and 123.0 Mhz will be used in conjunction with the existing 122.8. We do not know how many stations will be changed in Montana as this interference problem has not been

much of a factor here. In fact, it was rather nice to be able to monitor and use one frequency when using our airports.

Tower controlled fields will switch from 123.0 to 122.95. Great Falls has already switched to this frequency. Valley Industrial Park facilities located on the former Glasgow Air Force Base has been assigned the frequency of 123.0 Mhz, and will be operational as soon as the new crystals are installed and is the first station coming under the new criteria.

Breakdown of the new frequency alignment follows with the more common frequencies underlined:

122.700 — Aeronautical Advisory (AA) — Uncontrolled fields

122.725 — AA — Private airports not open to the public

122.750 — AA — Private airports not open to the public and air-to-air communications

122.775 — Future AA or multicom use

122.800 — AA — uncontrolled airports

122.825 — Future AA or multicom use

122.850 — Multicom

122.875 — Future AA or multicom

122.900 — Multicom

122.925 — Multicom — natural resources

122.950 — AA — airports with control tower

122.975 — AA — High altitude

123.000 — AA — uncontrolled airports

123.025 — Future AA or multicom

123.050 — AA — heliports

123.075 — heliports

We will keep you advised of any changes in Montana.

Applications for new unicom stations to serve the STANFORD and STEVENSVILLE airports have been filed with the FCC. Installation is planned in the next two months.



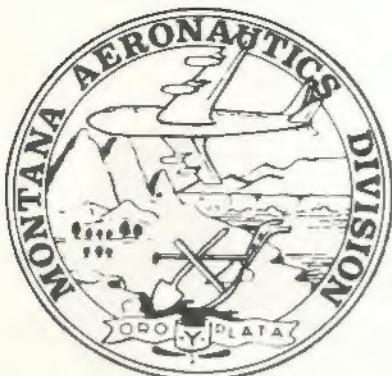
## NOTICE

We have been notified by the FAA that due to the Federal Privacy Act it is no longer possible for them to furnish us the names of those pilots who have received certificates.

### MEMBER

### NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE AVIATION OFFICIALS

**PURPOSE**—“To foster aviation, as an industry, as a mode of transportation for persons and property and as an arm of the national defense; to join with the Federal Government and other groups in **research, development, and advancement of aviation**; to develop uniform laws and regulations; and to otherwise encourage co-operation and mutual aid among the several states.”



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